

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Applicant would like to thank the Examiner for the careful consideration given the present application. The application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office action, and amended as necessary to more clearly and particularly describe the subject matter that Applicant regards as the invention.

Reconsideration of the subject patent application in view of the present remarks is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 5, 9 and 15 are amended.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

Claims 1-8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsujikawa (U.S. pat no 5,991,435) in view of Kishimoto (U.S. pat no 4,978,224) and official notice (MPEP 2144.03). Applicants respectfully disagree for at least the following reasons.

Regarding claim 1, neither Tsujikawa nor Kishimoto discloses, teaches or renders obvious grouping condition choosing means for choosing the grouping condition. Tsujikawa does not disclose the grouping condition choosing means, since Tsujikawa is silent regarding grouping as admitted by the Examiner in the Office Action. Kishimoto does not disclose any grouping condition choosing means, since no grouping condition under which a plurality of pattern holes are grouped into at least one data group is chosen in Kishimoto. Kishimoto merely discloses dividing the circuit board into areas to be viewed on the basis of the transmitted data (Figure 3) and the setting of viewing areas 31-33 for each of the blocks 34 (Figure 17). There is

no disclosure in Kishimoto that any grouping condition is chosen or the apparatus comprises any grouping condition choosing means.

Similar arguments will apply to claim 5. Accordingly, the combination of Tsujikawa, Kishimoto and official notice does not meet all of the limitations of claims 1 and 5. Therefore, the asserted combination of Tsujikawa, Kishimoto and official notice does not render claims 1 and 5 obvious. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection as it applies to claims 1 and 5 is respectfully requested.

Claims 2-4 and 6-8 which are dependent from claims 1 and 5, respectively should be allowable for at least the same reason as claims 1 and 5.

Claims 9-20 are rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Tsujikawa (U.S. pat no 5,991,435) in view of Kishimoto (U.S. pat no 4,978,224). Applicants respectfully disagree for at least the following reasons.

Regarding claim 9, neither Tsujikawa nor Kishimoto discloses, teaches or renders obvious grouping condition choosing means for choosing the grouping condition. Tsujikawa does not disclose the grouping condition choosing means, since Tsujikawa is silent regarding grouping as admitted by the Examiner in the Office Action. Kishimoto does not disclose any grouping condition choosing means, as discussed above regarding claim 1.

Similar arguments will apply to claim 15. Accordingly, the combination of Tsujikawa, Kishimoto and official notice does not meet all of the limitations of claims 9 and 15. Therefore, the asserted combination of Tsujikawa, Kishimoto and official notice does not render claims 9 and 15 obvious. Thus, withdrawal of the rejection as it applies to claims 9 and 15 is respectfully requested.

Claims 10-14 and 16-20 which are dependent from claims 9 and 15, respectively should be allowable for at least the same reason as claims 9 and 15.

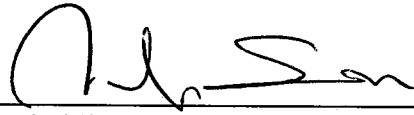
In consideration of the foregoing analysis, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in a condition for allowance and notice to that effect is hereby requested. If it is determined that the application is not in a condition for allowance, the examiner is invited to initiate a telephone interview with the undersigned attorney to expedite prosecution of the present application.

If there are any fees resulting from this communication, please charge same to our Deposit Account No. 16-0820, our Order No. NGB-35948.

Respectfully submitted,

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